



Smoke Alarm Requirements for Additions, Alterations, and Repairs to Existing One and Two Family Dwellings per Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC), 2011 Edition, Sec. R314

What extent of alteration, repair, or addition triggers the requirement for smoke alarm installation in existing single family and duplex dwellings?

The following work triggers the requirement that smoke alarms be installed throughout a dwelling, in compliance with ORSC Sec. R314.2.1:

- Any work to or within a dwelling that requires a structural permit.
- The addition or creation of one or more sleeping rooms.

Work that only involves electrical, plumbing, or mechanical improvements, without an associated building permit, does not trigger the requirement to install smoke alarms.

Work involving the exterior surfaces of dwellings, such as the replacement of windows or doors, or the addition of a porch or deck, is exempt from the requirement for smoke alarms.

ORSC Sec. R314.2 Requirements:

Smoke alarms shall be installed in the following locations:

- In each sleeping room.
- Outside each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
- On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and cellars, but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level, provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

Smoke alarms within new construction are required to be interconnected and hardwired to the dwelling's primary power. Interconnection and hard-wiring is not required where the alterations or repairs do not result in the removal of interior wall or ceiling finishes, thus exposing the structure. Battery-powered alarms are acceptable in these cases. If an alarm is solely battery powered, its battery must have at least a ten-year life.

When more than one smoke alarm is required to be installed within an individual dwelling unit, the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit.

Required smoke alarms shall not be located within kitchens or garages, or in other spaces where temperatures can fall below 40° F (5° C). Ionization smoke alarms shall not be located closer than 3 feet horizontally from the following:

- The door to a kitchen.
- The door to a bathroom containing a tub or shower (verify that the installation instructions do not require a greater distance from bathrooms).
- The supply registers of a forced air heating or cooling system, outside of the airflow from those registers.

A smoke alarm installed within 20 feet of a cooking appliance (as measured along a direct linear path) shall be a photoelectric-type smoke alarm or the alarm shall have an approved alarm silencing means.

If you have additional questions, please call the residential question line at 541-682-5611 or by email at residentialpermitinfo@ci.eugene.or.us.

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